

In the Claims:

Please amend claims 1, 11, and 15 as indicated below:

1.(currently amended): A method for pricing a cryptographic service on a network utilizing one or more cryptoservers, comprising:

- (a) receiving a request for the cryptographic service from a user utilizing the network, wherein the request is received by a cryptographic service provider;
- (b) generating a contract based on a variable pricing scheme in response to the request;~~and~~
- (c) sending the contract from the cryptographic service provider to the user utilizing the ~~network~~network;
- (d) receiving, by the cryptographic service provider, information from the user;
and
- B1 (e) applying the cryptographic service to the information using the one or more cryptoservers to satisfy the contract.

2. (previously amended): The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the cryptographic service provider selects one of the one or more cryptoservers to perform the cryptographic service.

3. (previously amended): The method as recited in claim 2, wherein the cryptographic service provider is a commercial service competing for customers.

4. (previously amended): The method as recited in claim 2, wherein the one or more cryptoservers is part of a single distributed service.

5. (previously amended): The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the variable pricing scheme is based on at least one of a data load of the one or more cryptoservers during performance of the cryptographic service, a distance between the one or more cryptoservers and the user, a congestion of the network during performance of the cryptographic service, and a rating of the one or more cryptoservers performing the cryptographic service.

6. (original): The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the variable pricing scheme is auction-based.

7. (original): The method as recited in claim 6, wherein the cryptographic service provider receives bids for performing the cryptographic service from the user.

8. (previously amended): The method as recited in claim 6, wherein the one or more cryptoservers bid for providing the cryptographic service.

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9. (previously amended): The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the cryptographic service provider is one of the one or more cryptoservers.

10. (previously amended): The method as recited in claim 3, wherein the cryptographic service provider provides a receipt upon performing the cryptographic service, wherein the receipt includes at least one of a one-way hash of the results of its computations, the time and duration of the computations, a description of the computations, and the identities of the one or more cryptoservers and the customer.

11. (currently amended): A computer program embodied on a computer readable medium for pricing a cryptographic service on a network utilizing one or more cryptoservers, comprising:
- (a) a code segment that receives a request for the cryptographic service from a user utilizing the network, wherein the request is received by a cryptographic service provider;
 - (b) a code segment that generates a contract based on a variable pricing scheme in response to the request; ~~and~~
 - (c) a code segment that sends the contract from the cryptographic service provider to the user utilizing the ~~network-network~~;
 - (d) a code segment that receives, by the cryptographic service provider, information from the user; and
 - (e) a code segment that applies the cryptographic service to the information using the one or more cryptoservers to satisfy the contract.
12. (previously amended): The computer program as recited in claim 11, wherein the cryptographic service provider selects one of the one or more cryptoservers to perform the cryptographic service.
13. (previously amended): The computer program as recited in claim 11, wherein the variable pricing scheme is based on at least one of a data load of the one or more cryptoservers during performance of the cryptographic service, a distance between the one or more cryptoservers and the user, a congestion of the network during performance of the cryptographic service, and a rating of the one or more cryptoservers performing the cryptographic service.
14. (original): The computer program as recited in claim 11, wherein the variable pricing scheme is auction-based.

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15. (currently amended): A system for pricing a cryptographic service comprising:

- (a) a network;
- (b) one or more cryptoservers for providing a cryptographic service;
- (c) logic that receives a request for the cryptographic service from a user utilizing the network, wherein the request is received by a cryptographic service provider;
- (d) logic that generates a contract based on a variable pricing scheme in response to the request;~~and~~
- (e) logic that sends the contract from the cryptographic service provider to the user utilizing the ~~network~~network;
- (f) logic that receives, by the cryptographic service provider, information from the user; and
- (g) logic that applies the cryptographic service to the information using the one or more cryptoservers to satisfy the contract.

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16. (previously amended): The system as recited in claim 15, wherein the cryptographic service provider selects one of the one or more cryptoservers to perform the cryptographic service.

17. (previously amended): The system as recited in claim 16, wherein the cryptographic service provider is a commercial service competing for customers.

18. (previously amended): The system as recited in claim 16, wherein the one or more cryptoservers is part of a single distributed service.

19. (previously amended): The system as recited in claim 15, wherein the variable pricing scheme is based on at least one of a data load of the one or more cryptoservers during performance of the cryptographic service, a distance between the one or more cryptoservers and the user, a congestion of the network during performance of the cryptographic service, and a rating of the one or more cryptoservers performing the cryptographic service.

20. (original): The system as recited in claim 15, wherein the variable pricing scheme is auction-based.

21. (original): The system as recited in claim 19, wherein the cryptographic service provider receives bids for performing the cryptographic service from the user.

22. (previously amended): The system as recited in claim 19, wherein the one or more cryptoservers bid for providing the cryptographic service.

23. (previously amended): The system as recited in claim 15, wherein the cryptographic service provider is one of the one or more cryptoservers.

24. (previously amended): The system as recited in claim 20, wherein the auction-based variable pricing scheme is conducted securely as a cryptographic protocol by some of the one or more cryptoservers.

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